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PREFACE.

IN drawing attention to the new title adopted, the Editor of "Lloyd's Magazine" desires to assure the large circle of readers, who have gathered round "The Poets' Magazine" since its establishment in 1876, that the unique position occupied by this, the sole medium devoted to *poetical* literature will remain unchanged.

The magazines of our day are many and varied, and never has the race for public favour been more keenly contested; but, in the midst of numerous contemporaries, "Lloyd's Magazine" will stand alone, and unrivalled in the estimation of all to whom Poetry is a delight and a reality.

The Editors of other publications give the pre-eminence to Prose, and judge that odd corners in their pages are suitable for the display of the poet's labour; we, on the contrary, place Poetry first and highest; and if there are any inferior positions to be awarded we judge that Prose is fittest to fill them.

While still adhering to the invitation we have often held out to all who possess literary talent to become contributors to our pages, we would not forget that many authors whose names are well known, and whose works have secured popular appreciation, have already contributed to "The Poets' Magazine." Among these we may mention—George Barnett Smith—Guy Roslyn—"Rita" (author of "Vivienne" 3 vols., "Like Dian's Kiss," 3 vols., etc.) R. H. Horne (author of "Orion") Samuel Carter Hall—J. W. Dalby—Wm. A. Gibbs (author of "The Story of a Life" etc.) Mrs. Lamson (author of "Rook's Dene" 3 vols.,) F. A. Kortright (author of "Anne Sherwood") David R. Williamson—Douglas Lithgow, M.A.—T. C. Corry, M.D.—Landsdown Cottell, R.A.—Agnes Stonehewer (author of "Monacella") and Ellis J. Davis (author of "Pyrna" etc.).

Unknown writers, therefore, who make their *début* upon the literary stage in our pages, will have the advantage of securing a high-class medium for their productions, and one which has not been unacknowledged by those who have climbed the steep hill of Fame.

In conclusion we would ask the critical gentlemen of the press, who have hitherto followed the progress of "The Poets' Magazine" with frequent favourable notices, to continue the support which their pens afford: and we would, at the same time, request our readers to help us by their recommendations, that the Magazine may be enabled to continue her prosperous voyage, and to rescue from oblivion many "mute inglorious Miltons" who would otherwise perish, unknown and unhelped, "with all their music in them."



ZVETA'S RANSOM.

A Tragic Tale of Herzegovina.

BY MRS. LAMSON.

Author of "Rook's Dene."

CHAPTER II.

THE HAIDOUKS.

"A day—an hour of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity of bondage."

WHILE awaiting the arrival of the Aga and his devouring horde in the land, which they would only quit after they had stripped it as bare as if a scourge of locusts had fallen upon it, we now glance at an institution to which those subjugated provinces looked for the little redress that was to be had for their terrible wrongs.

Into this community, which was a law to itself and owed no allegiance to the State, the young Velikonich had early been drifted. In fact, as soon as he could shoulder a musket he was enrolled among that daring band of brigands known for generations past as Haïdouks, whose retreats in the rugged and difficult mountain passes defied access to the uninitiated.

It is needless, perhaps, at this day to remark that these haïdouks must not be confounded with the savage banditti, or the highwayman of civilized countries, and had no moral resemblance to the robbers of the Italian ranges, nor the wild assassins of Sicily and Spain.

So far from waylaying defenceless travellers upon the road, they were a sort of voluntary police, drawn from every family in the district, without distinction of rank or position; bound together in a stern and terrible league to protect the oppressed Christians and their rights from Turkish violence and plunder.

They acted not only upon the defensive, but were sworn to a system of reprisals which not unfrequently surprised the Mussulman as he was carrying off, even with an armed escort, his illgotten spoils. It happened, too, occasionally, that nothing was ever heard of him, his equipage, or stolen booty.

The sacred body of many an Ago had furnished food for the vulture or wild beast in those impassable gorges, into which the infuriated tyrant had rushed headlong to destruction, in pursuit of his tormentors.

Hitherto the traditions of Nerontza had not been darkened by many such grim legends, for, while the tax imposed was ever a heavy burden, the people had been greatly prospered, and had found strength to bear it.

Unhappily, their prosperity had never been so great as to make it possible to provide for a year of dearth. The harvest thanksgiving of the land was gratefully sung if the year rolled round without a deficit, and with a fair supply of seed in store for the next Spring sowing.

Moreover, the people had profited by their neighbour's experience, and were in no mood to accumulate either riches or the fat of the land to any extent which would bring upon them the greedy eyes of their insatiable masters.

But to return to a contemplation of that formidable band, offensive and defensive, of the impregnable mountain tops. The leader of this was Ianko Petrovitch, a young man of the humblest birth and of little education, but of indomitable courage and purpose. He was self-taught, and knew, as if by intuition, the whole history of the Western invasion of Europe, every page of which was branded in his heart with letters of blood.

He was not more than five years older than Karnak Velikonitch, over whom as a boy he obtained great ascendancy. In such hands the willing youth became an early expert in the service of mountain warfare,—a warfare destined to assume a fearful shape

in his native vale. At once a scourge to the invader, but calamitous in its consequence to the peaceful, inoffensive inhabitants of the adjoining plains.

CHAPTER III

"I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul."

THE crisis long expected, and oft deferred, came at last. The plunderers arrived even with a larger retinue than usual, billeted unscrupulously upon the hungry peasants, who themselves fled in wild terror to the mountain holds, which were doubly guarded by the lion-hearted haïdouks.

The Aga, or chief of the collectors, in keeping with his dignity, settled himself and a chosen body-guard upon the household of the devoted Knezè.

His eldest daughter, Zveta, with her orphan cousin, upon the first intimation of the approaching cavalcade had been sent well guarded to the house of the Prefect, her grandfather, in the neighbouring province.

No light matter that journey, across many a weary mile in the heavy roads of the early winter, which was bitterly cold that year.

In spite of the failure of the harvest hopes, the tithe gatherer had taken time by the forelock, and made his visit in the month of October.

Unhappily, these terrible necessities had driven the peasants to sell a portion of the shortened crop. This naturally gave rise to every description of violence.

The portions sold were assessed at random for a sum many times multiplying the actual proceeds. To pay the extortionate demand was simply impossible. The collector resorted, in consequence, to acts of cruel coercion, which aroused counter-measures on the part of the local authorities, wherever such were Christians.

For a time, there was no armed resistance, and it can be assert-

ed with perfect truth that the Christians generally avoided as much as possible any meeting likely to lead to a hostile encounter with the Moslems.

But the spirit of wrath was rising. The small spark which had ignited in the peaceful vale of Nerontza, spread like wildfire in the surrounding plains. The ready and inflammable material had need only of a breath to blow it into a fierce and devastating flame.

The labouring peasants refused to work, and were supported in their rebellion by their Christian masters. Hundreds of families fled with their live stock to the mountains, and put themselves under the protection of the well armed Haïdouks. There Karak and his comrades had carried a small store of provision, in anticipation of a general stampede from the valley. But a lamentably small supply at best would that sequestered stock afford for the multitude who had nothing else to sustain life.

But we are travelling too fast, and must retrace our steps to that dark day when the Aga Yossef and his boon companions swooped down upon that devoted vale.

With the air and authority of an imperious master he took possession of the chosen home. After being well fed, and enjoying his comfortable siesta, he roused himself to an inspection of the premises. With an offensive contempt of common courtesy, he and his brutal staff wandered through the house, until, wearied with the laborious task, he returned to the room which he had made his head-quarters. This was the largest and most cheerful room in the dwelling, a better sort of kitchen, where the family took their meals, and pursued their ordinary daily avocations. Here, in winter time, they made themselves comfortable before the great stove, which is a national institution, sending its warmth to every nook and corner of the large room.

Aga Yossef returned from his cruise, and threw himself upon a luxurious divan, and called for coffee. The Knezè Veliko had been commanded to remain in the august presence to answer any questions which the Aga might be pleased to ask. He took no notice of the call for coffee, having already seen the men feed to satiety.

The silence which followed the laconic command was broken by the Aga Yossef's stern address to his host.

"Why is that apartment across the hall closed to me? I find no other door locked in that fashion."

"That is my childrens' room," Veliko replied, with the slightest tremor in his voice, as he thought of the terrified little Inka who was bolted within, with the female servants.

"Well, why is it locked? Do you think we are wild animals ready to devour the children?"

"I think you asked for coffee," said the Knezè, rising, anxious to avoid an explanation.

"The coffee will come. I want to go in that room first!"

"Oh, I cannot disturb my child, a perfect babe, doubtless sleeping now."

"We know your lies, you Christian dog. There is more than a baby sleeping there. We will see with our own eyes what hours are kept under lock and key. Just lead the way, or you will see there is a short road to the sacred spot, which don't wait for keys or bolts."

The insulted host knew that rebellion was vain, and commanded the trembling group within draw the bolts.

The Aga and his chosen escort crossed the threshold, and swaggered toward the frightened maid, who held in her arms the still more terrified child, who had hidden her fair face on the woman's shoulder.

"A baby of maturing years," said Aga Yossef, seizing the child's arm, and almost throwing her in convulsions, as she saw the burden of every terrible story realized, and believed that the awful Turk had truly come to thrust that fearful yotaghan through her fluttering heart.

In the full persuasion that her last moment had arrived, she clasped her little hands in prayer, and raised her eyes for a moment to the intruder's face, and then lifted them toward heaven.

In a faith before which maturer hearts should bow, she lisped in a clear musical key—

"Please good, dear God, don't let the naughty Turks hurt poor little Inka, nor papa, nor brother, nor sisters, nor anybody!"

The men, greatly abashed, drew back; but not to forget the marvellous vision. That beautiful face and head made an angelic picture, the like of which they never before had looked upon.

They retired, however, none the better for the vision, and resumed their lazy lounges, sipping the coffee which had appeared in their absence. In the intervals the sullen Aga Yossef persevered in his inquisitorial torture of the unhappy host.

"Tell us, oh Ghiaour, how many such sweet infants you are training for perdition."

The Knezè was silent.

"Did you hear our question? How many children have you?"

"I have but three children living?"

"Where are the others?"

"With the God of my fathers, I trust," replied Veliko, mistaking the question.

"You dog of a Christian! You know well enough we are asking for the living, not your cursed dead."

Veliko could not reply. It was all that he could do to restrain his hands from hurling the effeminate wretch from his door.

"By Allah! you are only dogs, and cursed ones at that. Where are your children?"

Veliko could not command his voice to answer. His thoughts leaped toward the wretched peasants of the glen. He knew well that they would pay for any indiscretion of speech in which he might be betrayed—and their lot he knew was bitter enough without intensifying.

"You vile and filthy dog of a Christian, do you refuse to answer me?—a son of the Prophet to be defied by the offal of the earth! By Allah! you shall tell me in what corner of this accursed rat-hole you have stowed away those children."

"My children are with their grandfather—the Prefect of a district not far off. It may be a dear experiment to trifle with him and his."

"Another accursed Ghiaour! We know the haughty infidel well! The worst of all beasts is a proud Christian with a little authority. By Allah! we fear him as little as we love him. Let those children be at home when our next round of duty brings us here. We would see the cattle that graze upon our lands. And as for you—faithless hypocrite, like all your tribe, we have an account to settle with you, who have gathered the fat of the land and leave the stalks for us to glean. We look to you for

what your infamous neighbours cannot supply. Let a hundred head of cattle—none of your filthy swine,—be collected, and driven for our inspection to-morrow, if you care to avoid the consequences of having outraged us.”

“There is not a hundred head of cattle to be had for a soul's redemption in all the province.”

“We are not talking about souls, you have none to save. Look after your heads. They are in danger. As for our demands, you will comply with them. If you cannot save your heads by a hundred oxen, we will accept the equivalent in gold and silver, which is more convenient and more easily transported.” He looked lazily around the decorated walls, and continued with a scornful laugh—

“Strip down those wicked, idolatrous pictures; melt your brazen gods which are scattered through your house, and turn all your fanciful rubbish into money. Your life, your children, your property all are ours. It is not our fault if you have brought on your own ruin, by your treachery and robbery. By Allah! the day is coming when, in spite of your league with the Franks and Moscovites, there shall be nothing left on earth but the remembrance of your cursed name, and a few landmarks to point out the spot your tribes defiled. But we only contaminate ourselves in talking thus to you. We should speak only to you with the sword. You are destined for the flames, and you will find what you deserve before very long.”

The blood mounted to the hair of Veliko's righteous head, and there seemed to congeal, for his face became livid with the terrible effort he had to put upon himself to control his anger.

His own life he knew was not worth a minute's purchase if he allowed the words to escape which trembled upon his lips. Yet even at that decisive moment he thought more of what the innocent multitude would suffer than of himself.

He could only reply, in the very calm of despair, that he would do his best to meet the extorted demands, and he left them to themselves, as he withdrew to the “childrens' room.”

There he was a welcomed guest, for as the night came on terrible fears took possession of the little bosom, and were not altogether strangers to the pale faced maids. But to Inka

it was an unspeakable comfort to nestle upon the father's strong arm, with the assurance that the "naughty Turk" was barred without.

Aga Yossef and his disappointed suite were forced to spend a quiet night in the Knezè's house, for no man, woman, or child could be found in the hamlets, except, perhaps, some decrepid old men who could not scale the sharp hill-side, and were left with the disappointed band of ruffians, which for no such quiet entertainment had been quartered upon the people.

Despite the humiliating want of hospitality, the visitors did not take their leave until a week had passed. The poor peasants meanwhile suffering terribly from cold and hunger where they huddled together like sheep in their places of rude shelter.

But the Aga was firm, neither he nor his rapacious escort moved an inch until every extortion was paid. The assessment grew larger each day. The hundred head of cattle became but one item in the overwhelming claim.

But the ransom was finally paid to the last piastre. For that time Veliko had preserved the roofs and walls of the plundered homes, to which the fugitives might return to contemplate bare walls enclosing emptiness.

The scanty store of furniture, of which, at best, the cottagers could boast, had been wantonly devoted to firewood or smashed to atoms. The few domestic animals which had been hastily driven to the mountain glades were but a sorry sight when brought down to the deserted fields, where there was food for neither man nor beast.

And to whom could the despairing, wailing multitude turn for redress?

Not the local Turkish masters, if they wished to retain their liberty, to say nothing of their heads. There was no use in appealing to richer neighbours, for famine and dearth stood ready at every door. There was absolute and universal destitution.

The prayer of the wretched people was that they might lie down and die beside their dishonoured hearths.

The Knezè Veliko had paid the ransom. But it left him with an empty purse and a dismantled home. There remained not one of the beautiful souvenirs of happier days beneath his roof; even

the long collected hoard which was destined for his daughter's dowry had gone to purchase the redemption of his suffering brethren.

When Zveta and Thekla returned they could not believe they saw the dear old home they had quitted but ten days before. It was about as difficult to recognise the darling father in the bowed and sorrow-stricken form which stood at the threshold as if to prepare them for the narrowed life to which they had come back.

Their young hearts ached more at the tell-tale face than at the blanks which the despoiler had left in their cheerful rooms.

CHAPTER IV.

“Hark to that cry!—long, loud, and shrill;
From field and forest, rock and hill,
Thrilling and horrible it rang.”

AGA Yossef and his retinue would have moved with more circumspection in their goings to and fro in the vale of Nerontza had they known that every act and movement were marked by hosts of avengers from their watch towers upon a hundred hills and crags.

They little dreamed even of resistance, those proud plunderers, as upon the stolen steeds they gaily and unsuspectingly dashed in broad daylight across the silent plain, led on by a practised guide, to scale the single mountain pass which lay between them and safety.

Their boisterous sardonic laughs echoed in a thousand voices from as many mountain cliffs as they slowly wound their way through the first sharp turnings of the fatal road. Suddenly, when there seemed nothing to inspire the slightest apprehension, their merry mirth was silenced by the flash and rattle of musketry which poured death upon them from every side, blinding their eyes as they looked up to the cloudless skies as if the blue ether were raining shot, pursuing them with fatal aim as they turned to the right and left to find a shelter in the high walls of rock, cut-

ing off retreat, escape, or quarter upon every side.

The frantic cries of the discomfited band to Allah were of no avail, and mingled horribly with the groans of the wounded horses, and bleating of the captured flocks.

Every man had been thrice marked, and not one escaped that three handed destroyer. There was not one Mussulman to carry the fearful story of retribution to the fortress not far beyond the mountain, where the crescent waved in proud defiance of the rights and liberty of the down-trodden race.

When there were no more to kill, the haïdouks came rushing down from ambush to secure their spoil.

With a terrible extremity of vengeance, every head was severed from the lifeless trunk, and stuck in ghastly array upon the towering rocks of that valley of slaughter. There they left them like so many turbanned sentries, inviting the foul birds of the air to do battle. Their dishonoured bodies were tossed like offal in a pit, upon which stones and the soil of the valley were thrown to cover the sickening sight.

The haïdouks led the unhappy peasants back to their desolate homes, of which but roofs and bare walls remained. As far as possible, restitution was made of their goods and cattle.

There was one sufferer they dared not approach with the fruits of their fearful retribution. Jacob Veliko fared none the better for the treasure which had been recovered from the plunderers. It enriched the famine stricken peasantry, but the dwelling of the injured Knezè brightened no more with the treasures which had once graced that happy interior.

He had scarcely more than a glimmering of what had happened for the league of the mountaineers was a close confederature. Of their deeds they made no boast, and the member who in treachery or weakness should reveal their doings would invoke a fate as little to be desired as that dealt out to the Turkish tyrants. But Veliko trembled in his ignorance, for he knew the terrible resources of their masters, and was sure any offence would be visited with tenfold cruelty upon the innocent.

CHAPTER V.

"But when ye least expect, in sorrow's day
Vengeance shall fall more heavy for delay."

BEFORE many weeks had past, disquieting questions came to the Knezè Veliko, which he was unable to answer, respecting the fate of Aga Yossef and his followers. He was known to have been quartered at Nerontza—but had never reached the next station at which he was due, nor had any tidings come to head-quarters of the contributions in money and kind he had been instructed to collect from the people of that valley.

Veliko had no other reply to make than the truth—that the tax had been gathered with a consuming interest, and that the Aga had departed after having exhausted the last resources of the place and its inhabitants. Nor could any information be acquired. No one had anything to tell of the fate of Aga Yossef and his suite.

This last assurance closed the correspondence, but the Knezè knew too well the temper of his masters to suppose that ended the investigation. He became a prey to the gloomiest anticipations—tormented by nightmares which troubled his sleep, while his waking hours were spent in anxiety and unrest. But time rolled on, and nothing came from the ruling powers, and even Veliko's apprehensions began to subside. The wretched peasants had managed—Heaven only knows how—to procure some seed corn, and patches of the barren fields were being sown. The weather was fine, and everyone hoped that some beneficent influence might bless the increase.

The family of Veliko were gathered one morning in the usual sitting-room—so sadly despoiled since first we saw it,—when a sudden dash of horsemen up the road sent a sickening despair to every heart.

The father and son needed not to be told that the avenger had come. The girls, with Inka and the female servants, were hurried to a crowded lumber room under the very eaves, while

the Velikos braced their courage to receive their visitors, and bear like men whatever might be in store for them.

Not waiting to ask admission, the party dismounted, and pushed their way into the house. At the threshold of the family room they were met by the Knezè, whose presence they haughtily acknowledged, and passed into the apartment. The spokesman, judging by the richness of his apparel and the decorations he wore, was an officer of high rank. His attendants, too, were gorgeously gotten up, as if to overwhelm and awe the simple people of the dale.

"We have come armed with power from our master, the Governor of this district, to demand tidings of our honourable envoy—the Aga Yossef, last heard of in this house."

"The Aga Yossef left this place in good health and condition, carrying the contributions he had collected from the population. Since then we have nothing to communicate."

"Do you know, most vile and contemptible dog of a Christian whom you address? Have we no title or name? Do you presume to speak to us without any posture of reverence?"

"Most honourable Bey, we meditate no offence. We bid you welcome to our humble house and simple cheer, but we have no tidings to give you of Aga Yossef. He left us richer than when he came, for he carried off fourfold of his first demand."

"Ya! We take that on the word of a Christian dog who has neither a soul to save or lose. But before we leave this nest of revolt, we expect you to find some tidings of our envoy, and give us some trace of the spoils which we are assured were wrested from him by the murderers who infest these hills. If not—mark ye this, ye rebel infidels,—we will make reprisals, and carry hostages back to our master."

At this moment Velikonitch, with his hand on his belt, where a dagger was always sheathed, started forward. A look from his father silenced him, and he retreated again. They stood a defenceless pair before the rapacious tyrant. They both kept silence.

"Have you no answer to give?"

"We have nothing most honourable, Bey, to tell you of the missing envoy."

"Then, by Allah ! you will find something to say !" he shouted, with a significant glance at his aides, who sprang quickly toward Veliko and made him their prisoner ; but before they could lay hands upon the son he had leaped through the open casement, giving as he bounded upon the earth a loud call upon the bugle which ever hung at his waist.

The hills and vales not only gave back the echoes a hundred times, but a myriad of answering clarion calls assured him that friends were rallying.

As soon as Veliko was secured, the usual sack of the premises commenced, and a band of ruffians was told off to inspect the rooms. There was little enough left to excite their cupidity, which the more exasperated them.

At the very first intimation of their approach, Thekla, in unthinking terror, rushed from her hiding place, and sped toward the hills, hoping to find a securer refuge, if not some strong protecting force. Alas ! poor girl, she had not gone many yards before she dashed into the enemy's very midst, and invoked in her innocence the most terrible fate that a pure woman could encounter.

Thekla Kanitza, the spotless, beautiful betrothed of the dauntless haïdouk, was lost for ever from the ranks of the honoured maidens of her land.

Velikonitch knew nothing of her flight. His first thoughts naturally were of the defenceless group gathered in the dusky loft, and to them he determined to fight his way. But the invader was there before him. His despair was maddening, but strengthened his arm to desperate action, when he learned that Thekla had gone forth from the shelter, and could scarcely fail to have been captured.

Two or three female servants had been already dragged from their places of concealment when Velikonitch reached the place.

Poor Asta was trembling in speechless terror in a hidden nook, which had not yet been discovered. He dashed into the midst of the ruffians, sword in hand—with which he kept the men at bay for a moment, for they had their hands already full in securing the shrieking captives, and for the instant were practically disarmed.

In that brief interval of suspense the welcome notes of the mountaineers' horn were heard below.

They had already rescued Veliko, whom they were carrying wounded and insensible to his bed-room. He had been severely injured in the scuffle which released him. The band of captors, finding themselves greatly outnumbered, and likely to meet the fate of those they had come to avenge, sprang to such horses as they could lay their hands upon, and made their way with all despatch to the road which would lead them to the friendly fortress, still many miles away.

Confusion also prevailed in the assailants of that upper room. When the sound of hostile voices and the heavy tramp of many feet were heard, they retreated with less deliberation than they had mounted. But quick as they went, vengeance was quicker, and more than one proud turbanned head lay low upon the narrow spiral stairway which led to the violated sanctuary.

Velikonitch stood resolute, and seemed to bear a charmed life as shot and deadly missiles whizzed past him as the miscreants dashed by. When the last had disappeared, his sister ran toward him through the half petrified group of servants, and threw herself upon his breast.

"Oh! brother! brother! where is Thekla?—she would not listen and remain with me? Oh! brother! is she lost?—" and the poor girl glanced wildly around the room, looking blankly upon the ghastly faces of the women.

"Oh! Karnak, where is Inka? Who held Inka! Inka!—our little darling Inka?" and she shrieked the child's name in the frenzy of despair.

Velikonitch seemed turned to stone. He neither moved nor spoke for some seconds.

"And where was the child?—who had the care of her?" he asked, in a hollow voice.

That precious little Inka had built a shrine in every heart, but to none was the golden-haired angel more dear than to the great, strong brigand brother.

"Where was the child?" he asked a second time.

"Here, in nurse's arms—but nurse is gone too. Oh? brother! surely she is safe. Would anyone do harm to our little Inka?"

"Harm! She is the very food such monsters fatten upon. Would to God we had seen her confined before this hour! May the vengeance of Heaven overtake them! But I must go. Zveta! sister, I must seek the child, and my poor, poor Thekla! I cannot leave thee here alone! Our father too!"

The sturdy fellow smote his brow, and tenderly held his weeping sister to his bosom for a moment, and then led her below. There he found Tanko mounting guard, as his warrior band pursued the discomfited Mussulman.

His father was lying more dead than alive, while a skilful hand was endeavouring to staunch the blood which was flowing too freely.

Velikovitch did not tarry to tell his tale of woe in his father's hearing, but quickly communicated the story of his wrongs to a few of his stalwart comrades. None had seen the infant captive, nor had encountered Thekla, but the vain pursuit began. There was little doubt that the unhappy child was already out of reach, for several women of the household had been carried off before the haïdouks were upon the scene, and doubtless the child had been seized with them.

Meanwhile, as if impelled by magic, the valley and far spreading plain had been depopulated. Woe to the hardy or defiant who had lingered; for few as the hours of Turkish occupation had been, it was faithful to its traditions. Pillage and licentiousness ran riot—squalid poverty had not been beneath the despoilers' notice—no hoard had been too small to be overlooked, nor anything so sacred as to be respected. Youth had been sullied, and the hoary head insulted. Thekla was not the only abducted maid, nor Velikovitch the only betrothed to vow speedy vengeance upon the foul invaders, whose touch was contamination, whose very presence was loathsome, and infected the atmosphere of purity and innocence with the miasma of corruption.

Happily the multitude knew too well what was to be looked for, and tarried not to take note of what had been spared to them of this world's goods. The life and honour of their dear ones were more precious to those sons of toil and oppression than goods and chattels. Everything had been left to the mercy of the

soldiery—in the general stampede which took place when the awful word went round that the Zaptiehs had come. Alas! for the few who could not fly, and on whom those unwelcome visitors had descended without warning.


(To be Continued.)

THE BALLADIÈRE.

BY ADIN WILLIAMS.

An Indian Tale.

1.

 H, land of the burning sunlight !
 Oh, home of the lithe Hindoo !
 Whose sky never knows the dunlight,
 Which silvers the northern blue ;
 A land where the rivers are deep and wide,
 And the Talipot tow'rs in palm-tree pride,
 Where the mountains reach up to kiss the cloud,
 But the black skinned people are bound and bowed.
 Pale faces now rule that far land,
 Where Moslem Sultanas gay
 Once wove for their lord a garland,
 For victories gained each day.
 From the wild weird legends of Eastern tale
 We can drag but shadows ghostly and pale ;
 But History sweeps Time into its net,
 Where the Dead are alive and tears are wet.
 The warlike Akbar was no more,
 His work of conquest long was o'er ;
 The rebels, from unrest and strife,
 Had sunk to beg a servile life.
 The pow'r of Akbar won its way,
 And all the land lived to obey.

The swarming plains were touched by peace,
Which gave each heart its work's increase.
Mild Jehanghir was now the King,
Whose goodness made his praises ring
From crafty Moor and swart Gentoo ;
And those who blessed him not were few.
The crowded ports, the busy mart,
The commerce of the open heart,
Saw happy souls with plenty fed,
And wasting war and famine fled.
Could man but rule his sickly brain,
Nor make his hope a past of pain :
Could human hearts, by fixed laws,
Pulsate in love, as in faith's cause,
The warring worlds would never ring
With winter woes among the songs of Spring.

2.

Soft was the lap of Taptee's water,
Over the sedges that framed its side ;
Lovely the form of Kali's daughter,
Laving her limbs in the rippling tide.
And her olive face and raven hair
Gleamed in the sultry evening air :
Low on the sand did the maiden lie.
There were nought but dusky palms anigh ;
And open Camalata blooms,
With rosy eyes and rich perfumes,
Around her drew its creepers strong,
That none but Love should do her wrong.
From the woods around no echoes float,
Save the night musician's note.
In this secluded spot how oft
Had she heard whispers sweet and soft :
Not long ago here had she met
A Moslem she could not forget.

Perhaps by Fate or sad mischance,
 Leone's idle steps were led,
 That evening when his roving glance
 Fell on the beauties of that head,
 Crowned with the Campac's blooms of gold,
 Set o'er her ebon ringlets fold,
 And eyes as dark, and lustrous skin—
 A form and features which would win
 The spirit from Heaven's battlements,
 To live on Earth in sweet contents.
 But Moslem though he lived in name,
 Yet there was more which none might know ;
 Of what and whence Leone came
 His speech and manners nothing show.
 He knew their tongues and walked their ways,
 He mingled in their festal days
 To learn all that which makes one nation
 Differ from its fellow men ;
 But wrapt himself in cold evasion
 At the probing question when,
 Some idlers of his past life sought
 His faith, his hope, his hidden thought.
 He was a Jesuit aptly skilled
 In all that self-assertion killed :
 A true disciple of that mind
 Which, rising like a gentle wind,
 And gath'ring strength from hour to hour,
 Girdled the world by blind obedient power.

3.

Like a flash from the river
 That melteth the sun ;
 Like a death-clutching shiver
 When pulses are done :
 Came the sight of that maiden to Leone's eye,
 Once when ev'ning had brought him musing thereby.

To see was to love her
Henceforth as his life,
When the bright stars above her
Soothed his mind's strife.
A glance had given her all his heart ;
A glance returned their loves impart ;
Then they had met when purple night
Dressed herself in spangles white.
'Twas then Radava's lattice wide
Opened above old Taptee's tide ;
Leone, creeping through the night,
Filled her heart with young love's light.

She heard his vows like the gentle rain,
Fall on her senses in blissful pain.
Then from the window bending, she
Whispered clearly, "I love thee,"
For the passionate gleams of the sunny south
Woke in her veins the seeds of fire ;
Wrenched the maiden seal from her mouth,
And flooded her lips with pure desire.
The moonbeams fell on the wainscot wall,
And chequered the leaves of the palm tree tall ;
While the mother-of-pearl in the window-panes
Flung them in sparkles like roseate rains.

4.

The joy was great in Kali's halls,
His palace built near Surat's walls ;
A rich Banian Bramin he,
True pattern of frugality.
Within the Room of Fountains sweet
His many guests did Kali greet :
Gathered to-night for feast and mirth,
The cause a thing of weight and worth.

And wherefore this occasion high ?
 At Kali's feet reclining sad,
 Who listless sees the gladness fly
 O'er all, but who is never glad ?
 'Tis Kali's daughter, fresh and young—
 Radava, she who lately flung
 The fervency of her hot heart
 Into Leone's life, 'till death
 Should freeze the currents of his breath,
 And love to faith should yield its part.
 She, doomed by Kali's hard decree,
 A Bramin's mistress soon must be,
 And join in yon Pagoda's pile
 The votaries, whom Bramin guile
 Devotes to pleasures wild and coarse,
 Bred by incitement's wanton force.
 All vain her wish and will in this,
 A father rules her joy or bliss :
 The Gentoo daughter hath no will,
 Another rules, she must fulfil.
 She knows the life she must live there,
 She knows what makes a Balladiere.

5.

Leone knew that on this fatal morrow
 Came the fulfilment of Radava's doom ;
 Not his the pow'r to save her from her sorrow,
 Nor foulness worse than Death pollutes the tomb.
 Of late a Bramin he had learned to know,
 Whose daily duties in that Temple flow.
 Leone, skilled to sift, to speak, to turn,
 From Moslem seeming, did for Bramin burn,
 To gain his love—love blinded from the right,
 He sought the Bramins as a proselyte.
 But this the rigid laws of caste forbid,
 Although this priest approved of what he did.

And much in secret Bramins were his friends ;
 So e'en at Kali's banquet he attends.
 And then, with flashing glance in tearful eye,
 Radava saw her lover standing nigh ;
 While mutual faith met in that stolen glance
 The mem'ry of the morrow pierced them like a lance.

6.

Far from the glare of the torch and the gladness,
 Wandered Leone away from that hall,
 Down by the river, which echoed his sadness,
 Low on the sand did he restlessly fall :
 Longing to crush from the world all its badness ;
 Striving to cope with mankind in its madness ;
 That he might save from pollution and shame
 Her who had kindled in him the love flame :
 He knew he'd broken priestly vows
 Which he had taken years before,
 Nor Love, the Lord of Life, allows
 His perjured vot'ry learn his lore.

7.

Tho' browned by the Indian summer,
 Yet Leone's face was fair,
 The face of a Western comer,
 From a chill and colder air.
 His light locks, flaxen, tawny,
 Fell upon shoulders brawny,
 Not bred in an Eastern clime ;
 From the green and flow'ring meadows,
 The land of cool grey shadows,
 In England he gathered to prime.
 But firm in that old faith which Britons scorn—
 That faith no offspring from a madman born,

He left his home, his friends and scenes of youth,
 And sailed the seas an exile for the truth.
 Now years have fled since he had left that land,
 But he hath not forgot its white walled strand,
 And in this silent hour, when sad and lone,
 His heart went over to that carven stone
 Beneath which rested, in their hallowed sleep,
 His mother's ashes,—there he longs to weep :—
 The grey church tower, the dull and diamond pane,
 His boyhood's home, all come back once again.
 The vision crowds before his closed eyes ;
 He opes his eyelids and the vision flies.
 Before him ran the Taptee's dark blue water,
 And closer to his thought clung Kali's daughter.
 When lo ! a glimmer flashes on his sight,—
 'Tis beck'ning—'tis Radava's chamber light :
 'Tis softly toned by porcelain painted walls :
 He knows it well—he feels the spell which calls.

8.

Radava is singing
 Alone there above ;
 Leone is clinging
 To reach to his love.
 Hark ! as she sings to a tremulous tune,
 How the low syrinda moans to the moon.
 “ Come down the water, my lover ;
 Come floating over to me.
 When my passionate heart shall uncover,
 All for thee ; all for thee.
 Then let thy hair's golden glimmer
 Light up the darkness for me ;
 But my love's light shall never grow dimmer
 All for thee ; all for thee.
 Blue blossomed Paradise beauty
 Shines 'neath thine eyelids on me ;

I have fall'n from my faith and my duty
All for thee ; all for thee.
Come, now the moon is peeping
Out of her kingdom at me ;
Come, now my heart is keeping
Watch for thee ; oh ! for thee."

He heard the soft voice gently slide
Adown the shadows to his side.
And as he paused to catch the sense,
Her grief, he felt his impotence.
But full of love, tho' hope was cold,
He answered her in accents bold :

"Like the surge of the circling ocean
Round a world which throbs and burns ;
Like a whirl to the central motion,
To thee my fond heart turns.
Like a light, which has waned and wasted
In a desert, seen from afar,
Was my life, 'till the day it hasted
To thee, my southern star."

No more, for footsteps stirred the sand,
And forms drew near from either hand,
As Kali came in rage and fear,
With slaves, who found Leone there.
Then Kali's blade gleamed swift and brown,
And cut the daring lover down.
But he, that Bramin who had taught
Leone how to change his thought,
Befriends the lover in this hour,
And shields his life against their pow'r.
To their pagoda he was ta'en,
Sore bleeding, senseless, well-nigh slain,
And there, a dying pris'ner pent,
Awaked to moaning discontent.

The Bramin knew him then to be
A Christian, and no Moslem he.

9.

"Lonely and reft of my life which has blossomed at last into love,
Now when it burst like warm flesh from the hard cold steel of a
glove ;
Holding a heart in its grasp, whose being was snatched from the
sun ;
Must I, then, die like a beast, beaten and broke and undone ?

Death brings no fears, only dreams of the Whence and Whither
of souls ;
Whence ? was not I from the westward where the silver
ocean rolls ?
Whither ? I know to the land which hath ever a breezy shade ;
Never a curse and a slave with a dripping blood-red blade.

God—are there Gods ?—here are creeds in this million minded
clime ;
Systems which trace back their God to the twilights of hoary time ;
One—and one Christ will I cry to, before I am under the sod—
Me they will bury,—not burn. Hear me, oh ! Mother of God !

Faith of my fathers sustain me !—I who have turned unto sin,
Let all my past and my passion mercy from Mary win !
Oh, that I never had known her—Radava, my beautiful sun !
What will become of her later ? Shield her, oh ! crucified One."

Leone, mutt'ring thus between
The fitful dreams of what had been,
Survived that night and half next day,
A feeble breathing thing of clay ;
Whose fire went out and spirit fled,

Regretful, to the silent dead.
His Bramin friend stood near him to the last,
And left him only when the sand was o'er him cast.

10.

But where was Kali's daughter
When the sunlight came ?
Moaning like troubled water,
Confronted with her shame.
The women came to braid her hair,
To make her arms and ankles bare,
To clasp the beauties of her breast
Between the light-wood supple vest,
All bright with many a shining fold
Of diamonds and leaves of gold.
Around her waist is tied the zone,
Hung with bells of tinkling tone ;
Until she stood in graceful ease,
Instinct with love and pow'r to please.
And the feast of roses found her
Steeped in her sin and despair,
Acting, as fate had bound her,
The life of a Balladiere.



KING EDWARD THE SECOND.

(A Dramatic Poem.)

BY PERCY RUSSELL.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE THE FIRST.—*A Room in King Edward's Palace.*QUEEN ISABELLA *solus*.

QUEEN ISABELLA. Stripped of authority, insulted by
This shadow of a King, my woman's soul
Rebelleth at the thought that we are one.
He leaves me to the persecution of
A minister, set up that I may be
Degraded in the sight of all the Court.
What was the vision of my early years?
To be the partner of a hero King—
A hero King! Why, I would sooner wed
The poorest minstrel of my sunny France,
Singing a ballad for his very meal,
Than be the plaything of this wayward King
Who acts towards me as I were still thirteen!

Enter a PAGE.

PAGE. A lady, may it please your Majesty,
Craves much an audience.

QUEEN ISABELLA. 'Tis granted by our leisure.

Exit PAGE.

My heart misgives me. Since the Bishop saved
That fatal letter from the Spenser's hands,
I've lived in terror.

Enter JANE DE MORTIMER.

JANE. Oh! most royal lady,
I come as woman never came to Queen.

QUEEN ISABELLA. Your name is—if we—

JANE. Jane de Mortimer.

QUEEN ISABELLA. Oh! sister to the Earl.

JANE. I am his wife.

QUEEN ISABELLA. I much mistrust thee—in his youthful days
Was Mortimer imprudent—

JANE. Stay, the wife
Will hear no censure on the husband passed.
As woman unto woman I would speak.
Here stand I, the good angel of the man,
And you his evil genius! There is some
Excuse for him, since he was wed before
Or intellect or judgment was mature.

QUEEN ISABELLA. Art mad or dreaming?

JANE. It is in your power
To be the saviour of two ruined souls
The one from misery—from sin the other.

QUEEN ISABELLA. What wouldst thou then?

JANE. On Mortimer look cold,
And win again his pardon from the King.
But on condition that he shall repair
All wrongs inflicted upon me, his wife.

QUEEN ISABELLA. Now do we know thee! This is but some plot
Hatched by the Spensers to bring us to shame.
Would you, a cast off leman of the Earl's,
Come here—the censor of your Queen?
Away! we spurn thee and were justice done—

JANE. I warn thee, Queen, if heedless to my prayer,
That thou at last shalt so corrupted grow,
Thy son himself shall thrust thee from his sight.

QUEEN ISABELLA. This to our face! Help!

Enter ADAM ORLETON and SIR THOMAS GURNEY.

Remove this woman! 'tis some crazy jade,
And, as you love us, let her be confined
Securely, and it must, my Lord, be done
Without consulting minister or King.

JANE, *as she is led out by* SIR THOMAS GURNEY.

When next we meet, tho' Queen, you'll tremble.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. Let this console thee—Mortimer is safe,
And counts each moment till the—

QUEEN ISABELLA. Bishop, hush!
But can this wretched woman be—

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. My daughter, on his very knees he swore
That at the altar he had never wed,
Or even loved till now. Long years ago
A maiden from him slight attention won,
This doubtless was the frenzied, creature who,
Finding her blind love could not be returned,
Has into madness wrought her troubled brain.
She cannot harm thee further—Listen now,
The King is coming, better thou retire,
Till I can fathom what his humour means,
Or he desire thy presence.

QUEEN ISABELLA. A good thought;
And yet, oh, Father, if he would unbend,
From the reserve of his demeanor cold,
To me, while every fool may win a smile—
Couldst thou but work this miracle in him—

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. Ay, truly this would be a miracle:
Disgrace and ruin are thy portion—if
Thou trustest Edward—

Exit ISABELLA.

She has some conscience, should she meet the King
Ere I prepare him, or that Mortimer
Be known as wedded, then our plot were marred ;
But she's so well encircled by our friends,
Some falsehood seasons every scrap of news
Permitted by us unto her to reach.
This Jane, too—she must closely be confined,
Until her freedom or imprisonment
Is each alike indifferent. Conscience? Yea.
Less had she tho' we could not work so well,
For every influx of this keen remorse
Her heart shall render only harder still.
Short-sighted Spenser! Thou wilt do the thing
That most we long for, if thou shouldst declare
All thy suspicions to Edward. I
Am ready to confirm them. But I fear
The wife of Hugh, young Eleanor the fair,
Nay, rather, Eleanor the pure ; she has
A something in her open face that makes
The boldest shudder when he speaketh false.

Enter KING EDWARD and the BISHOP OF EXETER.

KING EDWARD. How now? Soliloquizing like an owl?
That's just the fault I with my people find.
The English are too solemn—or too proud.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. Is this a speech, sire, for an English King?

KING EDWARD. 'Tis this that chafes me ever. I may not
Perform this office for myself, because
It is unworthy a Plantagenet.
I may not smile upon a bosom friend
Because to bear love tow'rd a subject is—
Oh! most unworthy a Plantagenet.
My Barons ordered me to wear a smile
When him I cherished a mad nation slew—
Ingratitude became Plantagenets.
I may not e'en amuse me as I would—

And why, forsooth? I'm a Plantagenet!
 Now hear me, Bishop, I of this complain,
 All those around me wishing me to be
 A monarch would not have me be—a man!
 I heard the Queen was here.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

With undue haste

She left the chamber the moment that
 I heralded thy coming—

BISHOP OF EXETER.

Oh! my liege,

Let not the error of a foolish child
 Upon the future woman fall as blight;
 We both stand here, sworn servants of the Truth;
 My brother Adam must my words approve.
 It is the Queen that can restore us peace—
 It is the Queen that plunges us in woe,
 While disunited from her sovran lord.
 Let's hasten to her, for I feel assured
 Her heart she will unburden of its sins,
 And at one word of sweet forgiveness cast
 Her on the bosom of a pardoning King.
 While by the Church your union's blessed anew
 And you receive, like Job's increased reward,
 A Queen not only—but a faithful wife.

KING EDWARD. You move me, Bishop—but then, Mortimer—

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. It is suspicious—

KING EDWARD.

By Saint David, what?

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. I dare not answer—only that the Queen
 Despises—no!—admires thy condescension to
 Rude boors and jesters—but she did not like—

KING EDWARD. Now, by the soul of my great father King!
 Dare you thus mock me? Must I then, forsooth,
 Come bowing lowly to this dainty Queen,

And whisper softly, "Madam, pray with whom
May I confer this morn?—whom should I shun?
Into what palm may I, with humble mien,
Place courteously that of Plantagenet?"
No! rather never see a woman's face.
Tell this fastidious damsel what we say.
Let her digest it as she can.
From this day forth we do but hold her as
A very child, capricious, weak, and vain.

Exit.

BISHOP OF EXETER. Instead of peace, my brother, you make war.
Remember 'tis a time of all times when
The Church should be united in herself.
If that you wilfully thus moved the King,
May you find mercy for a greater sin
Than any yet committed by the Queen.

Exit.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. To Isabella—"I but hold her as
A very child, capricious, weak, and vain."—
That sentence, King, shall make her Mortimer's.

Exit.

SCENE THE SECOND.—*Another Room in the Palace.*

Enter HUGH, reading a letter.

HUGH. A friendly warning—but if this be true
The tempest hardly may be ridden out.

(Reads.)

*The Queen is in communication with
Hot Lancaster and all the rebel Lords,
And this the watchword of the malcontents—
The death of Gaveston to be acted soon.*

ELEANOR *enters, steals up to him and looks over his shoulder.*

ELEANOR. What frightful words are these I see writ here?

HUGH. It is the sentence upon us pronounced,
And only wants—the executioner!

ELEANOR. What evil have you, or your father done?

HUGH. The evil of not being understood.

ELEANOR. I thought we were united unto joy,
But now it seemeth as if every night
The bony fingers of a horror dread
Undraw the curtains of our bridal couch.

HUGH. Then listen dearest. In the North I hold
A pleasant castle, standing near the sea,
There will I send thee with enough of wealth,
If e'er these sad forebodings should prove true,
To live in ease upon some kinder shore.

ELEANOR. Where threatens, then, this danger?

HUGH. Where I am.

ELEANOR. Then, no! My castle is my husband's breast;
And my wealth lies in his approving smile! *

HUGH. A noble answer! But I love thee more
Than thus expose thee—

ELEANOR. Am I not your wife?

HUGH. My wife! my angel! Why, one hair of thine
I hold more precious than my titles vain.

ELEANOR. Enough, together we will be in life,
Nor e'en in death divided.

HUGH. Could we but

Unto our party reconcile the Queen,
Not all the plots of guilty Mortimer,
Not all the hosts of disaffected Lords,
Not e'en the folly of our blinded King,
Could work us more ill than a puff of wind
May to the leaf it freeth from the dust.

ELEANOR. Canst not employ me in so good a cause?
I might do something. Surely if the truth
Of her position were declared unto
The Queen, she could no longer hesitate
Between the errors of the crooked path
That now she fast treads tow'rd a fearful end,
And the sweet pleasures of that open road
Where she might journey in continued peace.

HUGH. Alas! alas! small hope remains to us.
And should I send thee unto her, my dove—

ELEANOR. I would, returning, bring an olive branch.

HUGH. I fear, my sweet bird, she would only singe
With her fierce passions thy too tender wings.

ELEANOR. Peace-maker I'll be called henceforth for aye,
Since tidings glad be sure I'll quickly bring.

Exeunt.

SCENE 3.—*An Ante-room.*

BISHOP OF HEREFORD and SIR THOMAS GURNEY.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. The wife of Mortimer keep safely, and
Hold thyself ready for a venture great.
The wife of Mortimer?—his paramour—
He is not married yet—remember that—
Now leave me.

SIR THOMAS GURNEY. Lady Joinville shall indeed
Forget the name of Mortimer ere she
Recover freedom.

Exit.

BISHOP OF HEREFORD. Event is fast enveloping event.
How vast the power of man's mind? Here I stand,
And at this moment, tho' so seeming calm,
Decide the fate of Edward—work the fall
Of his two ministers, and force the Queen
To enter any path I may select.
The power *is* great, and power is what I love.
Not to guide armies, nor yet to be known
As Prince or hero, but in some still place
To scheme and plot, and, unobserved the while,
With Kings and Queens to play a game of life!
What's the next move?—to make the Queen suspect
That both the Spencers now are plotting deep
To murder her and the young Prince of Wales,
With the intention of compelling then
The King to marry some one of their blood.
A fine plot truly—likely to be true.
They *may* have such thoughts for aught *I* can tell.
'Twere natural. Once drive her o'er to France
Where Mortimer is waiting—and the rest
Is easy as to gather ripened fruit.

Exit.

SCENE 4.—*A Cabbage Ground, MARTIN BOWES at work behind.*

Enter KING EDWARD, BISHOP OF EXETER, *and the* EARL OF KENT.

KING EDWARD. A pleasant place this.

EARL OF KENT.

For a poor man—yes.

KING EDWARD. And why not for a monarch? In a King
Are all the qualities a beggar hath—
This difference only that the beggar's free
From the additions of unwieldy pomp.

BISHOP OF EXETER. Might not a peacock, my good lord, object
To being loaded with so huge a train,
No purpose answering but an empty show?

KING EDWARD. Together with its beauty, it hath use
To keep the balance 'gainst the forward breast.
But I defy you in created thing
To show me an addition useless as
The toys I at my coronation wore.

EARL OF KENT. Those were the symbols of a real power.

BISHOP OF EXETER. What people would be governed by a King
Who even seemed no better than themselves?
Man's pride revolteth at it—this I know
Is not unto his credit, but all things
That tend to awe men into quiet lives,
That tend to lead men to the open Church,
And tend to make them better than they are,
I hold as lawful, tho' they even be
The sceptre that gives majesty to Kings,
And crown that shadows their exalted brows.

KING EDWARD. Oh, good old man, if sometimes I should twist
The tangled thread of my philosophy,
Amid the snowy and unknotted line
Of your pure teaching, 'tis not I deny
Your arguments, but my wild humour loves
To run at seasons into wild extremes.
Ho! cabbage grower! now a word with you.

MARTIN BOWES—*advancing*. What want your worships with me?

KING EDWARD. We would gain
A little knowledge of your gardener's art.

MARTIN BOWES. It is no art, sirs, I have dug this ground
Some thirty years, and found it answer well.

KING EDWARD. How pass your days ?

MARTIN BOWES. I rise betimes, work hard,
Nor leave my tillage, till at early noon
I see my wife come with a frugal meal ;
And this dispatched, again I labour hard
Till eve, then homeward plod, weary with toil,
And solace find in sleep.

KING EDWARD. A tale soon told.
But didst thou never wish to see the world,
Have wealth, lie soft at nights, fine velvets wear,
Feed on rich dishes with attendants round,
And for thy wife a noble lady—

MARTIN BOWES. No,
To mix in this same world would weary me,
And make me discontented with my lot.
To be a rich man, saving you, sirs, would
But make much mischief and mere idleness,
Nay might e'en lead to murder, for 'tis said
On Tuesday last one of the Queen's men stabbed
A very worthy knight—the Spenser's friend—
To death in a dark alley : and to wear
Fine clothes would make me fearful when I dined
Of spoiling them. To taste of many meats
Would take away my appetite for one ;
And as to that fine Lady—tho' my wife
Is tanned all over like a sun-baked tile,
I should prefer her to the Queen herself.

KING EDWARD. Upon what grounds ?

MARTIN BOWES. We never quarrelled yet.

KING EDWARD. Cut me a cabbage from among your best,

For I would taste one.

MARTIN *retires*.

How I feel his words.

O, Isabella ! with what rapture wild
I still was wont to gaze upon thee, ere
Our rose of love was soiled by contact with
The dust polluting of this sorry world.
Would that my tears could wash its blossoms clear !
Where is the water to remove such stains ?
O bitter memory of the last three days,
I patient watching, and thou sullen mute ;
Until impelled by love, I try to steal
Thy tiny fingers and imprison them.
They are withdrawn with glance that scorched my heart.
It was not Mortimer that pressed thy hand,
It was not Mortimer that met thy eyes.
Would he were here to meet my vengeance just.
He hath escaped me—but ere flying plucked
The only apple from my tree of joy.
Yes, I have watched thee silently, until
Such passion stirred within me that I could
Have hewn thee into pieces as thou sat,
With those cold eyes that proved thy honour false,
And then have rushed forth smiting all I met,
Until I perished of my own fell rage.—
But no, I'd not be cruel—least to thee—

To the BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

No, Stapleton, not a whole kingdom's strength,
Not all the thunders of an angry Church,
Not the persuasions of an angel's lips,
Can bring back pure love to a woman's heart,
When one unhallowed thought has entered there.
My sorrow's now past cure. See that ye take
The bunch of green leaves from this sturdy knave,
And make him happy with a piece of gold.
Make happy him, but who can make me so ?
Stay, Edward, was there not an Emperor

Who said that he found planting cabbages
Far easier than the government of men ?

EARL OF KENT. 'Twas Diocletian.

KING EDWARD. Did he find content
In such employment ?

EARL OF KENT. No, his daughter and
His wife were murdered by the very ruler
To whom he, abdicating, gave the rod
That ruled the Roman world.

KING EDWARD. The moral of
His former glory. I shall find content.

EARL OF KENT. But not as he did. Heaven forbid such woe.

KING EDWARD. And were I now to fall would not our foes
Content be ?

BISHOP OF EXETER. Sire, let not such dreary thoughts
Cast deeper gloom upon an actual grief.

KING EDWARD. Doubtless they would, yet I the most content.
But, good lord Bishop, pray attend my son,
Instilling in his mind such precepts that
His father heeded not. Teach him to be
Proud to the noble, kind unto the poor,
True worth discerning, whether it lie hid
Beneath the jerkin of the lowest hind,
Or under corselet of the Baron bold ;
Stern unto false accusers, but as soft
As is the surface of a heart's-ease leaf
Unto the widow's and the orphan's plaint ;
And lastly prudent in the choice he makes
Ere entering wedlock, lest his happiness
Be marred for aye, as mine is shipwrecked now.

Enter HUGH DE SPENSER and HUGH, who both exclaim.

KING EDWARD. Oh, death ! Oh, madness ! am I then bereft
Of all that made humanity still sweet ?

HUGH DE SPENSER. Queen Isabella was companioned with
The Prince of Wales, sire.

KING EDWARD. Then may every curse
That tongue can utter fall and blast her head !
May she live on until her own child shall
Do unto her as she hath done to me.
Why stand ye gaping like the parchèd earth
In July for the tempest ? Stay ye here
To see me weeping like a silly boy ?
Away ! pursue them !—bid all England rise
And make them captive !—let the ocean swell
And cast them back on our offended shore !
But seek and find them !

(All depart various ways.)

Mortimer, I fear
That thou hast struck me past all curing here !

END OF ACT THE SECOND.

FORGET ME NOT.

BY H. KNIGHT.

“**F**ORGET me not”—I spoke the words
When youth was mine and hope was strong,
And, unsuspecting of a wrong,
My heart rejoiced with flowers and birds,
My lips broke forth in joyous song.

“Forget me not”—The years have waned,
And I have wandered far from thee,
O'er distant lands and surging sea;
Yet hast thou never once complained,
Nor waited for me wistfully?

“Forget me not”—Though from thy side,
Forced by stern fate to toil for gold,
I will return—and claim and hold,
The heart of my belovèd bride,
Ere hope is dead or love is cold.

“Forget me not”—Though years elapse
Ere I my promises fulfil,—
In toiling up life's barren hill,
Fatigued and faint, you fear perhaps
That distance doth affection kill.

“Forget me not”—For even now
I see thee in a vision fair,
And long to soon repose me where
Thy love shall all my days endow,
And lighten burden of my care.

“Forget me not”—Be strong, be brave;
True love shall triumph over fate;
The long'd for bliss *must* come, if late;
Though wildest waters lash and lave
Their fury-time doth soon abate.

“Forget me not”—I speak the words
In drear old age, now hopes lie dead,
She *hath* forgotten—hearts have bled—
The flowers are faded—flown the birds—
The sunshine of my life long fled.

A DREAM OF ERNEST.

BY ALICE COKAYNE.

I SAID in the Past I would grieve no more
The loss of my little child,
Yet the waves that ebb from the desert shore
Will return more fierce and wild :
Thus my sorrow flowed, tho' my lips had smiled,

Awakening moaned (when mine eyelids slept)
In dreams at the lone midnight—
Oh ! my face was pale as the stars which crept
Away from the eastern light,
Deep down in the depths of the infinite.

And the dream I dreamt was the scattered spray
Flung high on my throbbing brain
Of a waking thought, ere it rolled away,
For remembrance of my pain,
Lest in peaceful sleep I breathe joy again.

So I snatched my child, as by mad desire,
Away from the angel-band :
He was near the gates with his golden lyre ;
I could reach him with my hand :
I thought he heard my step on border-land.

I gazed in the depths of those wondrous eyes,
Once smitten as gems with light,
Now veiled with the mists of a sad surprise ;
Fringed with the shadows of night :
Those beautiful eyes that in yon fair height

Had shone with the radiance seen afar.
Ah ! where had that lustre fled ?
" Some glorious beam past the boundary star
Is wand'ring perchance," I said,
" In quest to alight on my darling's head."

I wove him a wreath for his golden hair,
White lilies and roses sweet—
Alas ! for the crown that had rested there ;
Was it strange no smile could greet
The passionate love laid down at his feet ?

That the curven lips should quiver with pain,
Heaven lingering in his breast,
As when fingers stay on some loved refrain
And the charmed air cannot rest
For the thrilling touch of its tuneful guest ?

That weary cry should my spirit wake
To it's insufficiency ?
As with heavenward glance my darling spake,
" Let some angel play with me : "
Then dimmed a life's fair blue intensity.

My dream was over, and never again
Shall I crave my child below.
But the day speeds fast, for the sunbeams wane,
And my troubled heart shall know
All love in the glorious after-glow.

WAITING.

BY BENJAMIN GEORGE AMBLER.

AH, me ! we watched the sunset, you and I,
Saw all the splendour of a heaven on fire,
Dreaming, that thus our souls should side by side
Stand, till the dawning of Eternity

Made us one perfect being ;
Soft the wind murmured among the leaves,
Whose tiny hands waved as in welcome to us,
And the scent of closing flowers was round us,—
It was bliss,
Beyond the bliss we dream of ;
Lo ! it passed, the tide of life swept on, and we
Parted for ever, and where in my soul
Once echoed strains of Eden, love, and hope,
I heard the battle cry of earth sweep on,
And said thy soul was noble, and thy love
Should make me noble also. Then I turned,
Entered the camp of life with heavy heart,
But iron resolution—They are brave
Who in the future have no hope to lose.
I have fought in life's great battle field,
Have seen the young and ardent smitten down,
Yet has despair not long within my breast
Made its abiding place, for I have gazed
Upon a glorious vision, and thy smile
Has lit my foot-steps upward ; not in light
Of living sunset streaming on thy hair
Have I beheld thee, tho' that memory sweet
Has like a diapason ever been
Heard through my life's sad music ;
In my dreams more holy rays streamed o'er thee,
Round thy head the nimbos, and thy form
Transfigured in such light as angels wear.
Was it illusion ?—was our love but given
That distance might divide it, death destroy ?
Oh ! soul sublime ! that stood with me and watched
The sun sink down—
Shall we not stand together in that day
Whereon no sun shall set ?—when life and death
Have faded like a vision, love not be,
With all that earth knew noble magnified !

DERUCHETTE.

(From Victor Hugo's "*Toilers of the Sea.*")

BY ETHEL URLIN.

SHE trips before—he lingers yet—
With steps irresolute and slow ;
Nor can he that sweet face forget—
So like a flower amid the snow,—

Her hair that's blown upon the wind,
Her soft dark eyes, and cheeks aglow—
She trips before ; he strides behind ;
So they two wend across the snow.

She trips before ; he strides behind ;
He thinks, " She surely cannot know ; "
Her fairy prints he scarce can find ;—
So small and light upon the snow.

Yet once, ah, once ! she turns her head,—
He almost hears his pulses go ;—
Then somewhat swiftlier on she's sped
Across the fresh and glittering snow.

Again she stops, he feels a charm
That holds him fast, as, bending low
With eyes downcast, and outstretched arm,
She seems to write upon the snow.

He watches her with chainèd eyes,
And thoughts that quickly ebb and flow,
While she just glances back, then flies
Swift as the wind across the snow.

He hastens on, he knows not why ;
Sweet fears and fancies come and go ;
At last,—unless his senses lie,—
He sees—his *name* upon the snow.

It means—Love surely cannot blind,—
It means—what long he fain would know ;
His name is, if he care to find—
Writ in her heart, as in the snow.

He homeward wends, nor cares that aught
Of Spring's delights should bud or blow,
One thing alone is in his thought,—
His name is written in the snow.

He homeward wends, nor ever strays
To see next morning's sunlight throw
Upon that name its fiercest rays,—
To melt it, with the melting snow.

CONTENTMENT.

BY E. IANSON.

EVERY day, and every hour,
Brings its pleasure and its pain ;
Yearn not for the morrow's dawn
When another day lies slain.

For how often when it cometh,
And we've thought how bright 'twould be,
Other troubles rise and face us,
Which before we failed to see.

Still we're always wishing, longing,
For some blessing we have not ;
Yet no sooner have we gained it
Than it is as soon forgot.

Let us then strive to be patient,
And contented with our lot ;
That each day may find us working
With firm faith that fainteth not.

IMMORTAL MIND.

BY J. S. THOMPSON.

WHEN first creative goodness wrought
These orbs with pure, omniscient touch,
The mind received ethereal thought,
While from its ray the light was such
As scatter'd o'er the darkling earth
Bright scintillations of its birth;
With Heavenly grace and hallow'd smile
That glorious Gift appeared!—erewhile
Each golden harp and silvery tongue
Creative power and wisdom sung!

Lightning and thunder—tempest, storm,
Thrill'd through the poet's searching soul;
Humanity's all-graceful form
The sculptor saw on Fame's high scroll:

Flash'd from the rainbow of the sky
The artist's spirit, clear and bright:
His tints with Nature's colours vie,—
His canvas glows with living light!

The poet with conception rife
Built up a consecrated shrine;
The sculptor's marble leapt to life,
In all save that itself divine.

The artist with a touch—a trace—
Made earth and ocean, sea and sky:
Or reproduced some dear old face
Long vanish'd in the days gone by!

Genius look'd down from heights sublime
To grasp inventions, wonder-fraught;—
Attaining with the course of time
Achievements ever grandly wrought.

Stern Reason with reflective themes
 The philosophic soul imbued;
 While sweet Religion's bounteous beams
 Each power with energy renew'd.
 Throughout the universe of light,
 Shines forth resplendent and refined,
 Supreme in majesty and might,
 The marvels of immortal mind!

NELSON.

BY W. C. DAY.

This Poem is founded on an incident in Lord Nelson's Life, narrated by Colonel Drinkwater Bethune, in his "Siege of Gibraltar," and of which that historian was an-eye-witness.

MEN land exploits that bring renown
 To Heroes—whencesoe're they come;
 Their names are rife on every tongue,
 Their deeds proclaimed in every home.

Still, whilst we sing the Conqueror's praise,
 Too oft will mournful memories rise,
 The cypress sears the laurel bays,
 And tears bedew the minstrel's eyes.

O! there are deeds unstained with blood
 As noble in their real worth,
 As aught of tented field, or flood
 That gilds ancestral pride of birth.

'Twas in the old war—'ninety seven,
Great Nelson's ship got under way ;
To join the Fleet of gallant Jervis
His Frigate* left Gibralter Bay.

Scarce had she spread her snowy sails
The troubled ocean's breast to face,
Three Spanish line-of-battle ships
Came bearing down in warlike chase.

Ne'er feared he foe, when hand to hand
He dared them on the crested wave ;
A dauntless hero in command,
A child—his vanquished foe to save.

But *thus* to fall ! without a hope
'Gainst odds so fearful to engage !
With quickening pulse his proud heart beat,
His noble visage paled with rage.

"Speed on ! set every stitch of sail !"
Now to the mast his eyes he cast ;
"My flag, my flag ! Blow favouring gale,
Preserve its honour to the last !"

Still nearer drew the chasing foe,
"Prepare for action" was his cry,
"As we have lived in honour, so
With honour, comrades, let us die"

That instant pierced his ear a shriek,
"Man overboard—let down the boat !"
Six fearless hearts with Hardy leap,
And straight the little craft's afloat.

*The "Minerva."

The current sweeps the boat astern,
The drowning man is sought in vain;
She turns, to signal her return,
Struggling the speeding ship to gain:

The Spainard hears—he sees his prize,
Brave Hardy and his crew are lost;
“Back mizzen, top sails” Nelson cries,
“No ship I’ll save at Hardy’s cost.”

Soon as the British Oak hove to,
The Don, to doubt his might began,
He knew the craven of his crew,
And feared to set them man to man.

He stopped, his squadron’s help to gain,
Slacked sails our Frigate’s progress check
“Pull, sailors, pull, with might and main,”
Hurrah! they’re on their vessel’s deck.

The freshening winds her canvas fill,
Proudly she answers to the breeze,
And, guided by her seamen’s skill,
Soon ’scapes the brigands of the seas.

Brave Hardy grasped his chieftain’s hand,
Their hearts were one from “ninety seven,”
To him he gave his last command,
And from his breast he passed to Heaven!

Wreath not the Chaplet’s honoured fame
Alone for Nelson’s *war* renown,
Such deeds ennoble more his name
Than records of the Victor’s crown.

HER BOY.

BY ALEXANDER JOHNSON.

SHE cannot sleep though the night hours flee ;
She's a mother—so starts and turns,
And thinks of her darling boy at sea,
As the taper slowly burns.

She slumbers now, but is restless yet,
For the wind on the window-pane
Plays on her ear like the moaning fret
Of winds on the mighty main.

But, soft ! she moves ; now quickly awakes,
With a cry of wondering dread ;
'Tis the fitful wind the casement shakes ;
And she bends in prayer her head.

* * * * *

Heaven sees her boy afar on the sea,
With the salt spray drenching his form,
As he stands upon his vessel's lee,
Breast-bare to the bitter storm,

To swim with a line to yonder wreck
With the shattered bulwark and mast ;
And, flying above her sea-washed deck,
The signal : " We're sinking fast."

For the boy's a swimmer quick and strong,
With a heart for heroic deed ;
The pride of the crew who round him throng
And wish him heart-felt—God-speed.

Ready to spring, he awaits his chance,
As she rolls from weather to lee.
He's off! and, quick as the eye can glance,
Is sunk in the seething sea.

And speeding on o'er his dread career,
Though Death is before and behind
Howling its threatnings in his ear
In each gust of scathing wind;

Now carried on high; now swept below;
And lashed by the water and wind;
Now borne, breath-bound, 'neath the foaming flow
From the bursting surge behind.

Well may the wrecked stand with bated breath,
And their tortured souls in their eyes
Fixed aghast, on the spectre of Death
Their conjuring fancies rise!

Yet see he swims though breathless and tired;
Side to side, and from side to breast;
And still with heroic purpose fired,
And courage true to the test.

Brightened with hope are those faces now
As the gallant swimmer draws near,
And they see his young but noble brow
Unmarked by a sign of fear.

But now it is the moment of fate,
And he spurts down the deep abyss.
Oh, why do they stand and hesitate!
He's lost if their lines should miss.


Heave! heave! By heavens! he's quick as he's brave!
Down plunges the stern of the wreck,
And caught from the crest of the grasping wave,
He's breathless, borne to the deck.

* * * * *

She sleeps, and a soft smile lights her face ;
 The night-winds murmur out their call ;
 But who can a mother's feelings trace
 In the night when storms appall !

ONLY A ROSEBUD.

BY HELENA GLENN.

NLY a rosebud,
 Red-hued and sweet ;
 Scattered in pieces
 Down at her feet ;
 Only some wrinkles
 Of anger there—
 Darkly o'erclouding
 The features fair.

Only words spoken
 In hasty scorn,
 Leaving two fond hearts
 Estranged, forlorn.
 Only a letter
 Written in vain !
 Shewing the anger—
 Hiding love's pain !

Only through long years
 Great grief to bear,
 Lonely—alone—with
 No one to care.
 Only some rose leaves,
Withered, once fair ;
 Telling of parting—
 And bitter despair !

SOME OF THE PICTURES IN THE ROYAL ACADEMY,
1879.

THERE can be no doubt that there is far more merit in this year's Exhibition than in that of 1878. The general tone is far higher, and the Academicians and Associates are far better represented.

Undoubtedly the pictures which have deservedly attracted the most notice are those by Mr. Long, R.A.—“Esther” (102) and “Vashti” (955). The former is, perhaps, the most telling of the two. Esther is seated in the foreground, with an expression on her face of hopeless pain—the large dark eyes are full of grief and unshed tears. Mr. Long has shown himself a master in the perfect symmetry of form and graceful arrangement of drapery which he has painted. The background is worked with regard to the minutest details, and harmonizes well with the dark skins of the slaves, and throws up the gauzy drapery of the Queen.

“Vashti” (955) is also a very telling picture, and the face of the Queen, reflecting the conflicting emotions in her breast, seems to grow more and more attractive at every visit. The figures of the dark-skinned slaves serve as foils to the whiteness of that of the Queen. It is a great pity that these two pictures are not hung in the same room.

“Elijah in the Wilderness” (188), by the President, is a masterly production. The figure of Elijah, lying on some rocks, in an exhausted condition, is very well painted, but the angel is too real—too material; it does not strike the observer as being sufficiently idealized.

Our old friend Miss Thompson has two most clever pictures. “Listed for the Connaught Rangers” (20) is a bold piece of painting; the figures of the men stand out well against a clear evening sky. It is a good representation of Irish scenery.

The same artist's “Remnants of an army” (582) is very interesting, more especially at the present time. The figure of the sole survivor, riding back on his weary little steed, to convey the news of the massacre of sixteen thousand of our soldiers on

the Tugela is well painted, and appeals at once to our sympathies.

An artist must be prepared to hear himself accused of "stageyness" wherever he attempts such a highly dramatic subject as "The return of the penitent" (550), by C. Amyot. There is a breadth and vigour of treatment in this picture which at once enlists our attention. The figure of the crouching girl at the door of her once happy home is quite a subordinate one in the picture: but the attitude and grouping of the other figures insensibly lead the eye to the figure. There is true dramatic vigour in this picture, without "stageyness."

In "Footsteps" (366), by R. J. Gordon, the artist shows power in his rendering of light and shade.

Peter Graham, R.A., is, as usual, well represented, his "Sea-birds' resting-place" (447) and (1,386) "Where deep seas moan" are stamped with a freshness and individuality peculiarly his own.

One cannot fail to admire the quiet humour of Mr. H. S. Mark's "Science is measurement" (379). A picture of a grey-haired philosopher busy with tape and compass, measuring the skeleton of some gigantic bird.

Poynter's "Game at ball" (307), so much talked of before the opening day, is, after all, rather disappointing. All the figures seem standing for their photographs. The drapery of the figure holding the ball is graceful and flowing.

There is a boldness and crispness of touch about Vicat Cole's "Ripening Sun-beams" that is very attractive. The effect of the sun's rays piercing the trees and falling on corn-fields is cleverly worked.

Mr. Ansdell, R.A., is, as usual, well represented. His "On Guard" (237)—a dog watching a perambulator and child—is most finely finished.

Mr. Alma Tadema contributes three or four small pictures, and in his "Down to the River" (238) shows that his hand has not lost its cunning in flesh painting.

"The Bathers Alarmed" (182), by P. R. Morris, is a clever piece of painting, but the foot of the girl stepping into the punt is out of all proportion to the rest of her frame.

"The Poacher's Widow" (195) and "In manus tuas Domine" are both quite up to Mr. Britton-Rivière's style. In the former,

the painting of the broken-hearted woman is clear and good.

"A Winter's Tale" (963) by the same artist is, probably, his finest picture—the little girl lying dead, or fainting, in the snow, while a dog stands over her, is beautifully worked out.

We were pleased with Mr. Moseley's "Dog of the Alps" (976)—it was carefully finished.

We are sorry to see that Mr. Frith has not sent up anything this year.

Space forbids our going into any further details although some of the other productions are well worth notice, especially Mr. Ellis' "Borders of the Birklands" and Mr. Barrand's clever little "bit" "On the Moors;" and Mr. Mackwhirter's four pictures.

H. SWEETLAND.

VOICES OF THE NIGHT.

BY WALTER McARTHUR.

"GENTLY fall the evening shadows
 O'er the hills and o'er the plains;
 Cattle slumber in the meadows,
 Hushed are now the wild birds' strains.
 Whispering leaves in light winds quiver,
 Moonbeams flush the silent grove;
 Stars gleam on the brimming river,
 Earth is wrapped in folds of love."

TOZER.

Have you never heard soft voices of the night whisper in your ear? Have you never felt sensations at twilight such as you could not with pen describe? Have you never, when alone by the margin of the restless sea, experienced a subtle charm as twilight fell, and night hushed the busy world to rest? Have you never, on a summer evening, longed, if even for a few short moments, to stroll away alone along the cliffs or through the

fields of waving mellowing corn? Have you never thirsted

“For a breath from the breezy down,”

or to be

“From the whirl of life for a season free,

From the moil of the crowded town?”

Aye! strangely sweet, and holy too, are the voices which at evening stir our souls, and bid our thoughts and aspirations soar to fairer realms yet unexplored. It is doubtful if even the most learned, scientific, or matter-of-fact man who ever walked the earth has all his life been free from feelings such as these—let him scorn them as he will, or try to argue by clearest reasoning that they are mere romantic dreams. “Dreams,” if you will, my scientist!—but dreams that elevate and stir our noble natures to levels yet more noble!

There are voices which come to us by the fireside, when “blind-man’s holiday” is reigning, and the flickering firelight flings our shadows on the wall—there are voices which come to us when we make one human atom in the crowds of busy cities—there are voices which speak again when all within the city sleeps, and scarce a footfall breaks the solemn silence—there are whispers which reach us through the murmur of the waves, or rippling of the streamlet, and which seem to tell, in language not to be misunderstood, that life is ever onward. “On, on for ever,” they seem always singing, singing and flowing, flowing and singing; never staying or slacking to look at work which is done, or to wonder in what future state they may flow.

There are voices which in foliage-shadowed lanes, in wild untrodden woods, and grassy meadows speak as audibly to hearts as human voices to the ear. Will any say these all are fancies—tricks of the imagination, which have no real power of speech? Little heart has he who can thus say!

But why should the fireside, the deserted city, the mist-clad evening landscape, or the waves of the ever surging sea, stir these thoughts within us, and make our puny aims, ambitions, quarrels and vexations all seem small? “Deep answers unto deep,” and hidden in our human nature is a chord which, struck by any kindred creations, gives forth harmonious music, divinely beautiful! There are men who will argue that this inner music is mere

sensation ; but there are many others whose more finely-wrought intellects will place it higher up the scale, and term it *consciousness*, which indeed if science tells us truly—great though the gulf may be between—is but superlative sensation. Nature first of all impresses us, then from this *impression* gradually grows *sensation*, and sensation matured is feeling in its highest form, or *consciousness*.

We will not argue here what consciousness may be—we are only dealing with the feeling that steals over our spirits when the shades of night are deepening, and nature hushes the world of toil and pleasure to rest.

It may be asked, however, “how can these sensations influence our characters?” *How?*—we scarce can tell, yet we know that they are mighty powers for good. Go out and let Nature in these ways be round you—watch the waves curling upon the sandy beach—wander in the woodlands at eventide and listen to the nightingales flooding the land with melody—watch the merry children playing in the meadow, while in the distance you dimly see the

“Lowing herds wind slowly o’er the lea”—

and afar the glorious sun making its rainbow-couch in the tinted West, and say if a thankful, restful, pure, and holy feeling does not steal into your mind! Some wise ones will tell us that in the nightingale’s piping there is no true music—that it is such as may be made artificially and mechanically. This may be so.

“All are needed by each one;

Nothing is fair or good alone,”

says Emerson, and it is not, therefore, only the song, but the combined effect of the whole—the woodland scene—the setting sun—the still, calm air, together with the unseen singer, that gives the charm, and weaves a spell around us. Were we to put to use the opportunities Nature gives us, we should use these moments well in which she shews herself to us more plainly, and when those traits of character that all men feel are high and noble, beautiful and true, expand themselves within our hearts, and elevate our thoughts; then, if we would try to keep our spirits to this higher level, we should feel the true effect and mission of the “Voices of the Night.”

CARE.

BY L. A. CUNNINGTON.

WHEN the toils of day are ended,
And has scarce begun the night ;
When on pictured dead ones faces
Shines the fire's uncertain light ;
When the sky is grey and stormy,
And the wind is cold and chill ;
While the voices of the children
For a time are hushed and still—
Or but heard in mellowed distance,
From within the nursery door—
Then, when I'm alone and weary,
Come sad thoughts of days of yore :
Then the cold hand of misfortune
Lays its weight on fevered brow :
When the daily cares are ended
Come the old ones ever now.
As I wearied sit and ponder,
Think of lagging life's drear way,
Which I now must lonely walk in,
Gone all earthly help and stay ;
In my heart there is an aching
Void that earth can never fill.
It has vanished !—all that bright dream,
But I grasp its memory still.
It has gone !—but as the rose leaf
Scented still, though dead, remains,
So its memory, fresh and fadeless,
Still my saddened soul retains.
Say, ye night winds, can ye whisper
Naught of comfort, naught of calm ?
Can ye bring no earthly virtue,
For my wound a healing balm ?
Say, ye waves, for ever singing,

Know ye not some distant shore,
 Which your waters lave unceasing,
 Where stern grief is known no more?
 "Nay," ye answer, wind and waters,
 But ye point me higher still;
 Tell me of a "rest remaining,"
 Murmur of a "Father's will."

ODE.

BY ALEXANDER JOHNSTON.

G ARDEN beauty, richest flower,
 Rarest in my lady's bower,
 Sweetest of thy lovely race,
 Fairest in this fairy place,
 Where is she on whom I call,
 Flower of flowers and queen of all?
 Fair she is, and pure as fair—
 Pure as light and Heaven's air.

Would you all her beauties trace,
 See her in that beauteous place
 Where the laurel interweaves
 With the myrtle's fragrant leaves;
 Roses rich beyond compare
 Vie with flowers of richness rare;
 Modest wildlings at her feet
 Raise their heads her smile to meet?

Could you, painter, there portray
 All the charms of matchless May?
 Could you make her dark eyes speak;
 Paint the bloom upon her cheek?
 Could you tint her ruddy lip,
 Give it moisture Love would sip;
 Give the play to beauties rife;
 Could you, painter, give her life?

REVIEWS.

"WEAK MOMENTS," by X.O.C. (Samuel Tinsley & Co., Southampton Street, Strand).—There is, perhaps, no class of book more difficult to review (with justice to the author's powers, and to the discernment of the critic) than that which may be termed of *mixed merit*. If the first half-dozen pages of a volume to which this description will apply are good, and the second half-dozen are below even average merit of first ventures, then assuming the space for the critique is limited, it becomes a question whether to dwell upon the good points or the bad. However, the safest course is, doubtless, to take into consideration both good and bad, and in order to do so successfully a careful reading of each separate page is necessary.

Here is an example of the best fare which our author has to offer. The lines are extracted from a poem entitled "The Bard's Criticism."

"For what is nobler than to chant thy thoughts
In language pure as flows the mountain stream?
That glides so gently through the level mead,
That ripples o'er the loose and pebbly sand,
That splashes 'twixt the smooth round boulder stones,
That hurls itself against the rough huge rock,
And falls in torrent down the precipice?
All this thou canst not do with equal power
When bound and fettered by like-sounding words."

There is thought contained in these lines, and they have also a certain melody of their own which all poetical ears will catch at once. And yet the same writer unblushingly sent to press the production entitled "Darling Nelly," in which we find the following unpoetical stanza, among others equally weak:—

"Calm I sit, to seem not caring! though my hair I'm almost tearing,
As my valet enters, bearing a reply from Nelly Gore
He may go, him quickly telling, soon o'er Nelly's words I'm dwelling,
Joy my anxious breast is swelling, as I read 'the hour of four!'
Darling Nelly! darling Nelly! for she names the hour of four,
'Near the rocks' upon the shore!"

We fear X.O.C. has fallen into the error of mistaking quantity for quality, which is always a temptation to aspiring poets. There is an unfortunate and unfounded notion abroad that the more *pages* a volume contains the better; that the public are so ravenous for literary food that they buy only those books which look as though

they would supply them with many meals. This is however, a libel upon public taste: for in the majority of instances we find that readers of verse prefer the muse to be "little and good."

Some of the poems in "Weak Moments" are spoiled by numerous elisions. The words "to" and "it" are constantly appearing as "t'" and "'t"; while "th'" for "the," and "'tis" for "it is" are again and again thrust into notice.

There are eleven translations from Horace, which are on the whole well rendered: besides several poems of religious tone, including a metrical rendering of "The Sermon on the Mount."

NOTICES.

Our next number will contain the continuation of "Thamar Carey," by G. B. Harvey, (unavoidably omitted in this issue); also a story of Saxon times entitled "Trust and Wait."

"Ianthé," a dramatic poem by Leonard Lloyd, appearing in the Poets' Xmas Annual, can be obtained of the author, price One Shilling. "*Full of thought and of Dramatic vigour.*"—Morning Post. "*Powerfully written.*"—Australian and New Zealand Gazette. "*Vigorous-ly sketched and containing many excellent passages.*"—Daily Chronicle. "*Much good reading.*"—Examiner. "*Vigorous verse.*"—The Queen. "*Has good passages.*"—Lloyd's News. "*Deservedly attractive.*"—Broad Arrow. "*Contains several sweet lyrics whose cadences cling to the memory.*"—Brief.

TO OUR READERS.

Original contributions are invited for this *Magazine* from all possessing literary talent. Special terms are made with authors of note.

Letters and M.S.S. (with stamped envelope for reply,) must be addressed to Leonard Lloyd, 62, Paternoster Row. E.C.

